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DRUG TRAFFIC

JOHN WINGATE: What does the CIA have to do with narcotics from Southeast Asia? This story coming up in one minute.

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Alfred McCoy is a twenty six year old graduate student at Yale University. He has written a research book on the relationship between the CIA, the Central Intelligence Agency, and what he says is the international traffic of heroin. He's on the telephone up at New Haven in Yale University.

How much research did you do about the CIA and trafficking in heroin? Alfred McCoy.

ALFRED MC COY: I began work in about January, 1971, and it's-- I've done some preliminary work for several months before that. And so when I add it all up, it comes to about eighteen months of total research. I'll bet I spent almost two months in Europe, interviewing former French intelligence personnel, and people in the French police and generally political observers who know a good deal about the French underworld. I travelled for four months in Southeast Asia. In Laos, Thailand, Northern Burma, very briefly in Northern Burma, and in Hong Kong. And then I spent several months travelling about the country, doing interviews with former USAID, United States Agency for International Development, and CIA personnel.

WINGATE: Now it's your contention, Alfred, that heroin has moved from Southeast Asia into this country with the aid, knowledge, collusion and even the financial support of the CIA?

MC COY: What I will say is simply this. In Southeast

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Asia one of the more opium growing tribes is the Meo Tribe of Northern Laos. And beginning in 1960 the Central Intelligence Agency formed an alliance, a military alliance with the leaders of the Meo Tribe. One of the traditional prerogatives of the leaders of the Meo Tribe is to control that tribe's opium traffic. And the CIA, beginning in the mid-1960's, provided extensive, comprehensive air transport, moving the opium out of the hills of Northern Laos, into the regional marketing centers, Vin Chan(?), Avidro(?), the administrative capital of Laos was one place where the opium was coming in on Air America Continental Air Service aircraft, aircraft which are chartered and in some cases controlled directly by the CIA. And then the other place that it was coming into was Lohn Chang(?), which is the CIA Headquarters in Northern Laos. And the CIA was absolutely, there was no doubt that they were aware that this was going on.

First of all, their pilots were carrying it on a daily basis. They were aware that the major cash crop of their allies, the Meo Tribe, was opium. They were aware that the pilots were carrying. And also in their very own headquarters, Lohn Chang, beginning in about 1967, to the best I can determine, there was a very very large opium refinery built there, operating at the northern end of the valley.

I interviewed former USAID personnel, who said they saw the refinery operating openly. It was processing opium into morphine, and as you know, morphine is the substance which is used to manufacture heroin. It was coming into Lohn Chang on Air American Continental aircraft, and it was going out on World Laotian Air Force aircraft, having been refined into morphine.

WINGATE: Now your book is to be published by Harpur and Row, correct?

MC COY: Correct. Hopefully.

WINGATE: Is it true that the CIA demanded from your publisher, and got the right to get that book in its hands prior to the publication date?

MC COY: The CIA was given the book last Thursday, and it will-- it has it right now. An agent from the Central Intelligence Agency arrived at Harpur and Row, picked up a copy, and signed for it, and took it down to Washington, D. C. to be reviewed. And ostensibly, they're going to have their response, their objections to the book to Harpur and Row this Thursday.